

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
554 Main Street
Portland, CT 06480-1104

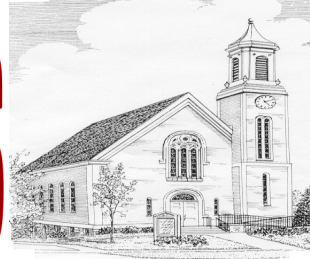
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Belfry Chimes
First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Portland, Connecticut
November 2019



The Belfry Chimes



**November
2019**

**The First Congregational Church
554 Main Street
Portland, Connecticut 06480**

The Reverend Jane E. Hawken

Office (860) 342-3244

Cell phone (860) 918-5415

Email jhawken@sbcglobal.net

Office Email address

first.church.pct@sbcglobal.net

Web site www.firstchurchportlandct.org

Please look us up on Facebook,

The First Congregational Church of Portland, CT

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Ann Labby (860) 614-4826

labbyannm@gmail.com

MUSIC DIRECTOR AND ORGANIST

Kasha Breau Cell (860) 983-6065

OFFICE MANAGER Margaret Stewart

Office (860) 342-3244

Office Hours: Mon. - Wed. 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

CHILDCARE PROVIDER Mary Clark

CHURCH SEXTON Ann Labby

NURSERY SCHOOL

(860) 342-1111 1stchurchnurseryschool@gmail.com

MEMORIAL GARDEN SUPERINTENDENT

Mike Wache

FELLOWSHIP HALL (860) 342-1111

THE BUILDING IS ACCESSIBLE.

Assistive Hearing Devices available.

The church has two Automated External Defibrillators (AED). They are located by the sanctuary front door and by the exit door of Fellowship Hall.

November 2019

- 11/3 All Saints Sunday**
9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
10:00 a.m. Worship, Communion, Pass-It-On Food Cart, Church School
Worship Assistant: George Law
Communion Presenters: George Law, Megan Ettlinger, Nancy Johnson, Phyllis Clark, Cari Klick
Deacon: Cari Klick
Ushers: Nancy Spooner and Ann Dimock
Coffee Hour: Nancy Spooner and Ann Dimock
- 11/10 Generosity Sunday**
9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
10:00 a.m. Worship, Baptism, Church School
Worship Assistant: George Law
Deacon: Sharon Kandro
Ushers: The Board of Stewardship
Coffee Hour and Taco Lunch: The Board of Stewardship
- 11/17 9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal**
10:00 a.m. Worship, Church School
Worship Assistant: George Law
Deacon: Connie Wache
Ushers: The Klicks
Coffee Hour: The Klicks
- 11/24 Thanksgiving Sunday**
9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal
10:00 a.m. Worship, Church School
Worship Assistant: George Law
Deacon: Megan Ettlinger
Ushers: Jan Poet
Coffee Hour: The Ettlingers

Reminder: Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, November 3. Turn your clocks back.



St. Vincent de Paul Dinner

A very special “thank you” to Gail Bergan, Jeannette Hodge, Bebe Larson, Megan Ettlinger, Faith Fraulino, Sharon Kandro and Ann Dimock for their time in helping make the dinner on October 27th such a success. The servers were: Karen Faass, Sally Irons and Jan Poet.

We sincerely appreciate your time and kindness.

Flowers Needed for Sunday Services

Please consider dedicating flowers in honor of, in memory of, or in celebration of someone or something special. You can make a dedication by contacting Kyle Eckert, the Flower Committee representative for November at 860 798-3490. Maddie Brunk is the Flower Committee representative for December and she can be reached at 860 879-8216. You may also use the sign up poster in Fellowship Hall or by calling the church office.

Volunteers Needed

The Board of Deacons invites you to usher on a Sunday or host a Coffee Hour. Sign-up sheets are in Fellowship Hall.

In October, the following people were remembered in our prayers:

Michael Yalenezian, Ann Hale, Martin Moon, Steven Winakor, Austin Zimmer, Tracy Johnston, Tim Fraulino, Steve Hall, Marge Tacey, Eleanor Rodrigue, Ralph Bonanno, Mark Vetrano, Jan Zagorski & family, and the families and friends of Alice Taylor, Jeff MacDonald, Susan Wilcox, and Eddie Mugg

Thank you to everyone for prayers to bring Lisa Harper’s husband here from Finland following a lengthy immigration process. Raimo arrived permanently on Thursday, October 17.

Financial Picture as of September 30th

Pledges for September \$10,041
Cash on Hand 9/30 \$21,940
Fuel YTD \$5,618
Lawn mowing YTD \$720
Major Maintenance fund balance is \$6,653
New railing at Fellowship Hall door \$550
Workers Comp insurance \$2,300
Insurance appraisal report received and paid \$1,860
Music License renewal paid \$133
Second quarter UCC OCWM paid \$1,014

THANK YOU FROM THE STEWARDSHIP BOARD

Our 2020 stewardship campaign has focused this year on all of the wonderful things we have to look forward to in the future of our church. Our theme is “The Future is So Bright” and we are so fortunate for the support of our congregation to help us move forward. From the concerts and musical events, to the amazing local and global work that our Missions Board brings to us, to the consistent investment in our beautiful sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, to our much anticipated 300th anniversary, we have so much to be thankful for in our church’s future.



Our 2020 campaign concludes on Sunday, November 10 and we are going to celebrate with a taco lunch after the worship service. Please join us for some great food and fellowship. Thank you to all who make the decision to financially give to our church – your contributions ensure a bright future for First Church Portland!

Memorial Garden Update

A Memorial Garden brochure is now available, complete with color photographs, description of Memorial Garden use, arrangement and pre-arrangement details. Brochures are in the Narthex and the church office.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

All are welcome to come and knit or crochet prayer shawls on Tuesday afternoons at 2:00. We meet in the conference room at the church. You may also craft prayer shawls at home and bring them to the church to be blessed. Prayer shawls are available to give to people going through difficult times or to celebrate one of life’s joys.

Please check with the church office at 860 342-3244 if you plan to attend in case there is an unexpected cancellation.

Baptism

On October 27, Finley Allen McNall, son of Avery and Maxx McNall, was baptized. Blessings to the McNall family.



Join the Adult Bell Choir!

The Adult Bell Choir will be playing during worship on November 24th and December 22nd. We are always looking for new people to join the “Ding-a-Lings” Crew. If you can make the rehearsals on the following Thursdays let Kasha know you would like to ring!



The Thanksgiving Service

Sunday, November 24 at 10:00 a.m.

Rehearsals are Thursdays, November 7, 14, 21 from 6:00-6:45 p.m. and Sunday morning November 24 at 8:30 a.m.

The Christmas Service

Sunday, December 22.

Rehearsals are Thursdays December 5, 12, and 19 from 6:00-6:45 p.m. and the rehearsal on Sunday, December 22 is at 8:30 a.m.

Kasha can be reached by emailing her at harpplayer@sbcglobal.net

Calling All Kid Singers!

We are excited to offer an opportunity to all children grades 2 and up to sing during two Sunday Services this Holiday Season. There will be two rehearsals prior to each Sunday performance. Here are the details.



Performance: *Sunday, November 24th (arrive at church at 9:15)*

Rehearsals:

Tuesday, November 12th from 4:00-4:30

Tuesday, November 19th from 4:00-4:30

Performance: *Sunday, December 22nd (arrive at church at 9:15)*

Rehearsal: Tuesday, December 17th from 4:00-4:30

Do not hesitate to contact Kasha Breau at 860-983-6065 with any questions or concerns. If you have a child who is interested, but cannot make the rehearsals please let Kasha know. We are trying to create a family friendly rehearsal schedule and feedback on this is welcome!

“Be joyful and sing as you come in to worship the Lord.” Psalm 100:2

Dear Friends,

During the October 21 worship service, you surprised me with a beautiful autumnal planter in recognition of Clergy Appreciation Month. While on the topic of appreciation, I deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity. It is a joy and a privilege to serve as your pastor.

As we enter the month of November and Thanksgiving Day approaches, our thoughts turn to gratitude and the need to give thanks to God and to one another. As the Apostle Paul wrote: “I thank my God every time I remember you.” *Philippians 1:3*

On November 3, All Saints Sunday, our service includes a remembrance of church members who have passed away during the past twelve months. We will also celebrate the sacrament of communion, and have a dedication of our newly acquired historic portraits of the Rev. Cyprian Strong, our church’s third pastor who served from 1767-1811, and his wife Abigail. Many thanks to all who generously donated to the purchase of the paintings.

On November 10, you are invited to Generosity Sunday when our financial pledges for the coming year will be dedicated and the Stewardship Board will host coffee hour and a luncheon. We thank the Board for reminding us that “the future is so bright” at First Congregational Church!

On November 24 we will observe Thanksgiving Sunday at our 10:00 a.m. worship service. Later that day at 7:00 p.m., we will participate in Portland’s Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at Portland United Methodist Church. More details will be forthcoming about this service when we come together with neighbors and friends to give thanks to God.

May God bless your Thanksgiving gatherings, meals, traditions, and celebrations!

Yours in faith and gratitude,

The Rev. Jane Hawken



All Saints Sunday November 3

On November 3, All Saints Sunday, the service includes the reading of the names of our church members who have died in the past twelve months: Beatrice Johnson, Marilyn Lord, Russell Morrison, David Richardson, Joy Ruty, and Alice Taylor.

From your 300th Anniversary Committee

Exciting and historical news has come our way. Upon doing some research on the internet, our committee's historian Diane Burgess discovered that a portrait of our third minister, the Rev. Cyprian Strong and a portrait of his third wife Abigail are for sale from an antique dealer in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Rev. Strong served this church from 1767 until his death in 1811 and is buried in Center Cemetery. He is also our second longest serving minister having served this church for 44 years.

These portraits were painted in 1800 by William Jennys, an early American painter (1774–1858). Jennys's earliest known paintings were produced in Milford, CT, but he traveled throughout New England and painted portraits for nearly 16 years and was prolific and very successful. There are over 100 paintings of Jennys's works on record, with nearly 100 more attributed to him. Needless to say, these portraits are quite the find and so historically significant to not only our church, but also to the town of Portland.

The Council approved the purchase, and the portraits were bought with the very generous donations of our church members. The committee would like to sincerely thank everyone who helped to fund this very meaningful investment. A part of Portland's history has been preserved with the addition of these precious paintings.



Please plan on attending the November 3rd worship service
when the portraits will be displayed and dedicated on
All Saints Sunday.



November Birthdays

- 1 Helen Sibley
- 2 Debby Taggett
- 2 Devin Aresco
- 2 Julia Hall
- 3 Francis Card
- 3 Mike Enright
- 4 Justin Renk
- 4 Hal Larson
- 4 Rebecca Hall
- 4 Elijah Eckert
- 4 Jacob Winakor
- 6 Sandy Baines
- 7 Maxx McNall
- 11 Peter Larson
- 13 William Jahnke
- 13 Jessica Bardo
- 14 Eleanor Morrison
- 15 Sydney Wallengren
- 16 Emma Hodge
- 16 Ivy Maurice
- 17 Colin Fitzgibbons
- 19 Joe Pizzichemi
- 19 Xenos Sroka
- 20 Madison Leary
- 20 Earl Brunk
- 20 Will Coiteux
- 22 Drake Rettich
- 23 Kathy Blachowski
- 23 Stephen Russo
- 23 Anita Bengtson
- 23 Beth Gould-Ruitto
- 24 Sherry Ford-Lyman
- 29 Emily Foote
- 29 Jaimie Shaw



November 2019 Gratitude Journal ~ A Special Thank You To:

- ~ **Margaret Rumford** for her generous donating of the cherry tree in the Memorial Garden.
- ~ **Shirley and Cliff Barrett** for their donation towards the Thanksgiving and Christmas bulletins.
- ~ **All who donated items** to Hawkwing for the South Dakota Lakota reservation.
- ~ **All who participated in the Women Together Program** preparing kits and sewing "Capes of Courage" and "Dress a Girl" dresses.
- ~ **Those who donated** socks and gloves for the local Food Bank.
- ~ **Megan Wache and Jon and Heather Faass** for their leadership of the Youth Group.
- ~ **All who participated** in the UNICEF Carnival and the Board of Christian Education for the baked potato lunch.
- ~ **Rev. Hawken** for the Blessing of the Animals service.
- ~ **All who contributed** to the Neighbors in Need offering.
- ~ **The Board of Stewardship** for their work on the 2020 "The Future is So Bright" campaign.
- ~ **All who donated** to the fund for the purchase of the portraits of Rev. Cyprian and Abigail Hart Strong.
- ~ **John Hall** for his October 13th sermon and **Linda Cunningham** for substituting as organist.
- ~ **All who contributed food items** for the October 27th Soup Kitchen dinner.
- ~ **The knitting crew** who are creating prayer shawls for those in need of a comforting wrap.
- ~ **Those who assist in worship** by donating flowers, serving as ushers, candle lighters or bell ringers, and those who provide refreshments after the service.
- ~ **Bob Hale** for donating fall fertilizer for the Memorial Garden.



ANNUAL HOLIDAY COOKIE SALE

Saturday, December 14
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Your help is needed to make this annual event a successful fundraiser for the church.

How can you help?

Make several dozen Christmas cookies and package them half dozen to a bag.

Please label your contributions clearly: name of cookie, if it has nuts what kind, gluten free, and any other important allergy information. Being creative with your packaging helps sell!

Donate Christmas related items to be used in a variety of ways. Look for the Cookie Sale Contribution Box in the fellowship hall at the end of November. (Items needed by Sunday, December 8th.)

Note: Your cookie contributions can be dropped off at the church until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 13th or Saturday morning, December 14th between 8:30 a.m. & 9:00 a.m.

Thank you in advance for contributing to this popular community event and helping your church out at the same time.

Remember to come and shop!

Looking ahead to our 23rd Annual Chocolate Fest February 1, 2020

It is never too early to begin thinking of this big event in the life of our church especially since it is the earliest it can be in February. Please consider these two needs before the rush of the holidays.



Jewelry needed: We are now accepting new or used necklaces, bracelets, earrings, pins, etc. We would love to take them off your hands.

Themed baskets filled with items are appreciated! So far, we have Car Cleaning, Popcorn Party, Here Comes Peter Cottontail, For the Greater Good, The British are Coming, and a Super Bowl Basket.

Do you have an idea? Let Nancy Johnson know.

Thank you in advance for your help!



Church Grounds Fall Clean-Up

The annual Fall Clean-Up day for the grounds of the Church is going to be on Saturday, November 16 beginning at 9:00 a.m. with a rain date of Saturday, November 23.

Clean-up will last for approximately two hours, but come for however long you can. Participants will need to bring rakes, gloves and any other cleaning/yardwork tools needed.



Board of Missions The Giving Tree

The tradition of helping the Portland Food Bank and its leader, Ruth Maio, provide Christmas to many needy Portland families continues this holiday season.

Our Giving Tree will be set up in the Sanctuary the Sunday after Thanksgiving on the 24th of November. If you would like to participate, please take a tag off the tree and replace the tag with an ornament made by the First Church Nursery School children. Record the tag number and your name on the clipboard located by the tree. The tag will tell you the age and gender of the person as well as a suggested toy or size of clothing. (Please note ~ there is also a family number on the reverse side; this number is needed by Ruth in order to coordinate the gifts ~ this is for their use only.)

You may take as many tags as you wish; however, all gifts are due back at the church, and placed under the tree, by Sunday, December 8 in order for the Food Bank to distribute the items in time for Christmas. Please remember to attach the tag to the outside of the unwrapped gift.

Your time and kindness is sincerely appreciated in helping to make a joyous Christmas for those in need.

Board of Missions

“Pray It Forward” is growing and will continue to grow throughout the remainder of the year. The idea is to use your heart and share a gift. We welcome anyone who would like to participate.

Every two weeks a volunteer will receive \$50.00 from the Missions Board to donate to a charity, a charitable fundraiser, soup kitchen, food bank, special program, organization or someone in a family in need who is important and meaningful to you...or the gift does not need to go to someone you know; it can go to support something or someone anywhere in the world.

Be Creative!!! Have you ever seen that one person on your way to work who could use a winter coat? How about purchasing one, keeping it in your car and passing it along when you see him on a blustery, winter day? If you volunteer, you will have two weeks to make a donation and then come back to the congregation and share your “giving story” on how you chose to spend the money and why. A guideline sheet that summarizes all of the information is available—not to worry. The Missions Board is here to help. Let’s make a difference and Pray It Forward!!

From the 300th Anniversary Committee Meeting

The anniversary committee met on September 24th with 10 members present. Our main focus was the progress of our new historical booklet with our goal to have it published next summer. Updating 50 years of history is no easy task, but our members are sharing in the responsibility and it is coming together nicely. We continue to interview members and encourage everyone to share your thoughts by pondering the questions we have suggested below. You can give them to a committee member or email them to us at FCCP300th@gmail.com.

We welcome Gail Bergan who has recently joined our committee and invite anyone who might be interested in becoming a member to let us know. We would love to have you as together we “Celebrate the Spirit” (our theme) of the past, present, and future of this wonderful church. Our next meeting is Tuesday, November 19th at 6:00 p.m.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- 1) What are some of your First Church related memories?
- 2) What have been some of the best times for you at the First Congregational Church of Portland?
- 3) If any, what would you consider to be the challenging times during the life of the church while you were there?
- 4) What do you see as the major changes that took place over the years while you were a member?
- 5) What are your remembrances of the music at church?
- 6) What do you recall about Christian Education?
- 7) What memories do you have related to Missions and/or Ecumenical Involvement?
- 8) What do you recall about past anniversary celebrations?
- 9) What would you like to see happen during the celebration of our 300th anniversary in 2021?
- 10) Please tell us one or two of your fondest memories that you carry with you of First Church.
- 11) Are there any other areas of your time at First Congregational Church that you would like to share?



A detailed illustration of a single red poinsettia flower. The flower has several large, pointed, bright red petals radiating from a central green core. Several dark green, serrated leaves are attached to the stems, surrounding the flower. The entire illustration is set against a plain white background.

A vibrant red poinsettia flower with several large, pointed petals and a cluster of small yellow and green buds in the center. It is surrounded by several dark green, serrated leaves.

DEDICATION INFORMATION:

Dedication #1: In Celebration - Honor Of - In Memory Of
(please circle)

Dedicated to:

From:

Dedication #2: In Celebration - Honor Of - In Memory Of
(please circle)

Dedicated to:

From:

Dedication #3: In Celebration - Honor Of - In Memory Of
(please circle)

Dedicated to:

From:

Thank you!!

Flower Committee

Alissa Brunk, Maddie Brunk, Kristen Dimock, Kyle Eckert, Reagan Fitzgibbons, Nancy Gondek

From The Board of Christian Education

Welcome to the busiest time of the year that is filled with lots of activities and events. We hope you and your family can join us during this wonderful season.

In Christian love, Ann Labby, CE Director

UNICEF BOXES

PLEASE RETURN UNICEF BOXES TO CHURCH BY SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10.

Youth Group Activities

On Sunday, November 3 at 12:00 noon, the youth group students of all ages will be meeting for lunch and then going to "Fun In" Trampoline Park in Middletown. You don't have to be a member of our church to participate. You can bring friends to join you. This can even include toddlers. **You MUST RSVP to labbyannm@gmail.com**

GAME NIGHT

It's time for FUN, FOOD & FELLOWSHIP!

Introducing the new "What's Up"

First Church Youth Group!

Open to ALL Portland teens in **grades 9-12**

Come and join us in Fellowship Hall
Pizza, games, and planning of future activities!

Thursday, November 7 from 5-8pm

Bring your friends! RSVP to any of the
Youth Group Leaders

Megan Wache megan.wache@gmail.com

Heather Faass hfaass51219@gmail.com

Jon Faass faassjon@yahoo.com

Deck the Halls, December 1

Following Church School we will set up the Creche, decorate cookies and do crafts with the students. We will have musical entertainment.

The Christmas Pageant is December 15

This will be during the church service. Please let Ann Labby know if your child would like to participate (labbyannm@gmail.com). There will be speaking and non-speaking parts and behind the scene helpers. Sign up sheets are in Fellowship Hall or contact Ann Labby at labbyannm@gmail.com

We will have one rehearsal on Saturday, December 14th 10:00 to 12:00 noon.

Welcoming Statement

We, The First Congregational Church of Portland, Connecticut, are an Open and Affirming church. With God's grace, we continue to be a congregation that includes persons of every race, ethnicity, age, family configuration, marital status, mental and physical ability, economic status, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. All are welcome to share in the life, sacraments, missions, responsibilities and blessings of participation in our community of faith.

Winter Storm Cancellations

During the winter season, if there is a snow or ice storm warning or in process, please turn to:

Channel 3 WFSB at

www.wfsvb.com; or WVIT,

www.nbcconnecticut.com for Sunday worship or church event cancellations.



CANDLES FOR ADVENT

On Sunday, November 17 and 24, the Christian Education Board will be selling Advent Candles. They will also sell Advent Wreath Kits. This will take place after worship in Fellowship Hall.

Southern New England Conferences Annual Meeting

Members from United Church of Christ Congregations in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island are coming together for a meeting in Worcester, MA from November 1-2.

We celebrate our individual conferences and our new Tri-conference officially beginning on January 1, 2020.



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Everyone is invited to go Christmas Caroling at the Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center on Sunday, December 15 at 2:30 p.m. Meet at the facility at 333 Main St. at 2:15.

PASS IT ON SUNDAYS

Our church and the Missions Board sponsor our monthly *Pass It On Sundays* to benefit the Portland Food Bank. This takes place on the first Sunday of the month. Please discuss this important outreach with your children. They may not be aware that there are families *in our town* that need help. The *Pass It On* cart is always outside the sanctuary for donations of non-perishable and paper good items. You can point out to your children that this is another way that we can *help our neighbors*.

Young Stewards of the Church

The Church School students are being taught how to become Stewards of the Church. They now have their own envelopes for their weekly offering to the church. We encourage the children to earn the money themselves and put it in the envelopes each week for their donations. The envelopes are available in the Narthex and in each of the classrooms. Please encourage your child to use the envelopes and become a Steward of our Church!

Christian Education Calendar

November 3 12:00 p.m. Youth Group Lunch and Trampoline Park

November 7 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. "What's Up" High School Youth Group Kick Off Party

November 10 11:30 a.m. Board of Christian Education meeting

December 1 11:15 a.m. Deck the Halls

December 14 10:00 – 12:00 noon
Pageant Rehearsal

December 15 10:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant
2:30 p.m. Christmas Caroling at the Portland Care and Rehabilitation Center.

Be A Phantom Bottle Donor

When you turn in your bottles and cans at **any** grocery store, take the receipt and drop it in the Phantom Donor container in Fellowship Hall. We will cash it in and donate the money to the church! Become a phantom Bottle Donor.

Teaching Schedule

November 3: Week 1 Student Worship
November 10: Week 2
November 17: Week 3
November 24: Week 4

Bell Ringer/Candle Lighters

November 4: Ally Dudzinski
November 10: Nolan O'Connor
November 17: Colin Fitzgibbons
November 24: Hazel Ettlinger

If your child (1st grade and above) would like to be a bell ringer/candle lighter please contact Ann Labby at labbyannm@gmail.com

Portland Interfaith Thanksgiving Service November 24, 7:00 p.m.

The Portland Interfaith Thanksgiving Service will be at the United Methodist Church, 381 Main St. Portland. The service is on Sunday, November 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Members and pastors from area churches and faith communities will participate, and there will be a community choir singing an anthem.

A monetary offering will be taken to benefit a charity still to be determined.

Please bring nonperishable items for the Portland Food Bank. A reception will follow the service.



"Share a Pint" Annual Red Cross Blood Drive

On Friday, November 15 from 1:00-6:00 p.m. First Congregational Church will sponsor a Red Cross Blood Drive. Please consider making a blood donation to help the Red Cross maintain its supply.

A sign up schedule is available online at www.redcrossblood.org if you plan to give blood.

Phyllis Clark has once again graciously agreed to be the contact person for this event. If you would like to volunteer your help by baking or volunteering on the day of the blood drive, please call Phyllis at (860) 342-3364.

And thank you, Phyllis, for your help!